



State of Tennessee
Health Facilities Commission

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Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Grants the Tennessee Health Facilities Commission Waiver Extension to Train and Certify Nurse Aides; HFC Extends Deadline to Challenge Nurse Aide Competency Exam

NASHVILLE – The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) granted an 1135 NATCEP waiver request from the Tennessee Health Facilities Commission (HFC). This waiver will allow Tennessee to train and certify 2,650 Temporary Nurse Aides (TNAs) by April 5, 2023, or the end of the public health emergency, whichever comes first.

The Tennessee Health Facilities Commission maintains the Nurse Aide Training and Competency Evaluation Program (NATCEP). Within the program, HFC conducts the state competency examination for individuals to become certified nurse aides (CNAs).

As of July 2021, the State of Tennessee has 4,166 Temporary Nurse Aides. A remaining 2,650 TNAs have not tested to become certified nurse aides. The Tennessee Health Care Association (THCA) and applicants have reported to HFC staff that there is a difficulty obtaining seats in physical testing locations.

In order to reduce the backlog of TNAs awaiting testing, HFC filed a waiver request for an additional six months to test and certify these individuals. During the granted six-month extension, HFC is working with the state's Central Procurement Organization to issue a request for proposals (RFP) for a testing vendor to conduct online and physical testing. HFC is also working with Tennessee universities that have registered nursing programs to proctor mass-testing for TNAs statewide.

In addition, the Health Facilities Commission is extending the deadline for qualified TNAs to apply to challenge the nurse aide competency exam. TNAs must have completed the requisite items prior to October 6, 2022, to be qualified. Qualified candidates can apply to challenge the NATCEP until December 16, 2022 at 5:00 P.M. Central Time. Challenging allows a qualified candidate to request to test without completing a traditional training and competency evaluation program.

The application and application instructions can be viewed on the HFC website [here](#). To apply to challenge, a TNA must submit the following information to HFC in one complete packet: a copy of their Social Security card; a copy of state or federal issued photo identification; a certificate of completion of the AHCA/NCAL Temporary Nurse Aide 8-hour online course training; and documentation certifying completion of one hundred (100) hours of service as a Temporary Nurse Aide in a nursing home setting under the supervision of a licensed or registered nurse. Completion of the required hours served must be documented in a formal letter from the nursing home and signed by the Director of Nursing or Nursing Home Administrator.

For a Temporary Nurse Aide to challenge the NATCEP to take the exam to become a Certified Nurse Aide, all required documents must be submitted in one packet to the Health Facilities Commission by December 16, 2022 at 5:00 CT. Temporary Nurse Aides must test to become certified by April 5, 2023. No further extensions will be given. For more information on challenging the NATCEP, individuals are encouraged to reach out to HFC Nurse Aide Program Manager Teri James at Teri.James@tn.gov.

“The Tennessee Health Facilities Commission is dedicated to continuing testing Temporary Nurse Aides to allow them to enter into the workforce as Certified Nurse Aides. We appreciate CMS and their work to ensure that this is accomplished,” said Caroline R. Tippens, Director of Licensure and Regulation within the Health Facilities Commission.

HFC will submit monthly progress reports to CMS throughout the six-month waiver period. The waiver was covered under the CMS COVID-19 blanket waiver.

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